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SWAFFHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Copy Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year ended 31st December, 1937

To The Chairman and Members of
The Swaffham Urban District Council.

Gentlemen.

I have the honour to place before you, my Report as Medical Officer of Health, for the year 1937.

It has been impossible for me to render this before as the vital statistics from the Registrar General were only received by your County Council on May 9th inst, and by me the following day.

GENERAL REMARKS.

I think I can again say that the health of the Town has continued good throughout the year. No epidemics of any disease came our way though at one time we had four concurrent cases - or almost concurrent - of Scarlet fever, this being the nearest approach to an epidemic during the year.

Building has proceeded well on the new housing estate, and though I was personally not in favour of the site as situated, I feel that you are to be congratulated on the 'tout ensemble' of spacious airiness in the site and the architectural effects of the houses and bungalows.

POPULATION. Your Surveyor's approximate figures for this are given in his report as 2,800. The figures of the Registrar General show 2632 while my own estimate based on the addition and subtraction of the annual births and deaths is 2648. This shews a slight decrease on the preceding year.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS. 32 births were notified - 2 being illegitimate. This, as opposed to 21 in 1936 analysed there were 15 females and 17 males. One still birth was reported. The rate per thousand population for Swaffham is therefore 12.13 as compared with the Country as a whole whose figures are 14.9 while the smaller residential towns show the higher figure of 15.3. This is a jump from last year of nearly four points when our average was only 8.9. Deaths were 40 as compared with last years 39 and the deaths per thousand population were therefore 15.19 as compared with England and Wales as a whole of 12.4

ANALYSIS OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS. 2 deaths occurred under one year, of the 40 deaths notified 21 were male and 19 female. 10 died of heart disease of some sort, 4 from old age and nothing else, four from cerebral haemorrhage and similar conditions, Two from Bronchitis, Two from Pneumonia in all forms and the remainder from other defined diseases, with the exception of 1 which was classified as "ill-defined or not known"

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE. Seven cases of infectious or notifiable disease were reported, four of scarlet fever, 2 of pneumonia, and 1 of Erysipelas. Last year there were 3 cases only.

HOUSING. Your Surveyor's report has given you full details of the progress of the Housing programme so that it is enough for me to give you figures of new houses completed. There are 8 by your Council and 4 by private enterprise, while one large house has been converted into two smaller houses of the detached "house flat" type. 26 further houses and bungalows are contemplated by your Council, and I think it possible that several

possible that several more will be erected by private enterprise. My last years Report drew attention to the unfinished approach to the new housing estate and these have now been completed and are excellent though the completion was somewhat slow and the Inhabitants of King Street and Queen Street had to put up with a considerable amount of mud in the early winter. The opening in White Hart Lane - to the new estate - is a great improvement, and will I am sure be appreciated by the residents.

DAIRIES COWHOUSES &C There have been periodically Inspected by your Surveyor, and any matter of complaint by him has been brought to me. I have on several occasions had occasion to examine and condemn certain foodstuffs, but there has been no real complaint as to sanitation.

WATER. This supply has been continuous and good, once or twice during the year a small amount of temporary sediment has appeared in the water, but this has quickly cleared away and been due to the mains, and not the supply. The well has, I believe been added to increase the supply, and this has I understand proved a satisfactory adjunct. To this part of my Report I can only once again add that the Swaffham water is exceptionally hard and some form of softening would be an enormous improvement.

LIGHTING &c I still consider the charges per unit for electricity are too high. As I pointed out last year Corporation electricity as supplied in large towns and their outskirts, is on a very much cheaper scale.

THE establishment of Marham as an Aerodrome must have benefitted the town in many ways, and is certainly an adjunct to the District.

THIS, Gentlemen, concludes my Report for 1937, and though my tenure of office is likely to be terminated by the appointment of a whole-time officer, I have to thank you for your kindness in reappointing me for a further twelve months, and trust that should the appointment of the permanent officer be again postponed, that I may be allowed to continue as your Medical Officer which I have now held for some 16½ years.

I have nothing further to say except that I should like to place on record the cordial cooperation and help given me by your Sanitary Officer and Surveyor, Mr Hudson.

I am, Gentlemen

Your obedient Servant.

(Signed) R. O. TOWNEND.

May 1938.

Submitted to Council.

8th June 1938.

